

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 246

By Harwell

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the Chaffin's Barn Dinner Theatre on its fortieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable institutions that bring the joys of artistic expression and culture to the citizens of this State; and

WHEREAS, the Chaffin's Barn Dinner Theatre, which celebrates its fortieth anniversary in 2007, is one such worthy institution and has made a substantial contribution to the cultural fabric of this State; and

WHEREAS, A.W. "John" and Edna Lou "Puny" Chaffin founded the Barn Dinner Theatre in March of 1967; bringing Broadway to Nashville, the theater was an instant success and the first of its kind in this area; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, the Chaffins handed the business over to their son, John, who along with wife, Janie, still runs the theater today; and

WHEREAS, although they retired from the business long ago, the elder Chaffins never miss a show; and

WHEREAS, the Chaffin's Barn Dinner Theatre continues to uphold its long tradition of theater excellence by producing for its patrons an unrivaled assortment of comedies, musicals, and mysteries in a live Broadway-style show, while offering a delicious buffet freshly prepared each day in the theater's kitchen; and

WHEREAS, for the 2007 season, Chaffin's Barn is presenting a collection of some of the most requested shows from its exemplary forty-year tenure, including *Any Wednesday*, *Modern Love*, *Chicago*, *Saving Grace*, *Mixed Emotions*, *Smoke on the Mountain*, *Lend me a Tenor*, *Run for your Wife*, *Sorry, Wrong Chimney*, and *The Game Show Show*; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the unwavering hand work of the Chaffin family, the Theatre's success relies upon the dedication to excellence of its core leadership team; and

WHEREAS, Martha Wilkinson, Artistic Director for Chaffin's Barn, first came to the theater in 1988 as a cast member in Chaffin's Barn's production of *Chicago*; prior to her arrival, she was a resident actor at Cumberland County Playhouse; and

WHEREAS, a native of Rome, Georgia, she was trained as a performer at Darlington School, the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, North Carolina School of the Arts, and Berry College in Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the esteemed Mrs. Wilkinson has performed regularly with Chaffin's Barn for fifteen years, garnering nine local theater awards for her performances in musical theater; she and her husband, David Compton, pioneered Spotlighters, a performance workshop for children which offers year-round intensive study at Chaffin's Barn for children interested in performing; and

WHEREAS, set construction guru Ray Ingram began his affair with theater crafts twenty-four years ago at the White's Creek Community Theatre; he has since created scenic treatments and amazing specialty props for eighty-one productions at Chaffin's Barn and served as the Production Stage Manager in his first thirty-five shows there; and

WHEREAS, a 1990 graduate of Trevecca Nazarene University, the astute Mr. Ingram embarked on his professional career in theater under the watchful eye of Robert Kiefer, Properties Master for the Tennessee Repertory Theatre; he subsequently completed a five-season tenure as a Properties Master with the Nashville Opera; and

WHEREAS, the flourishing Chaffin's Barn seats approximately 250 people in its Mainstage Theatre and produces nine shows a year on that stage, operating continuously for fifty weeks out of each year; and

WHEREAS, the Backstage Theatre, which opened in 1986, seats nearly sixty people and produces comedies and mysteries on a part-time basis; and

WHEREAS, the Chaffin's Barn's leadership successfully broadens the horizons of its patrons by providing a new and inspiring experience with each visit; and

WHEREAS, Chaffin's Barn has been warmly welcomed by a thankful community which has been entertained and enlightened time and again by the theater; and

WHEREAS, the Chaffin's Barn Dinner Theatre has inspired applause from the arts community of our nation and has brought honor to the State of Tennessee, and is worthy of the recognition of this State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby join with the administration, staff, and volunteers of the Chaffin's Barn Dinner Theatre, the Chaffin family, and the citizens of Tennessee in celebrating the Theatre's invaluable contributions to our State and its cultural landscape for the past forty years, thank the good people associated with the Theatre for their service to Tennessee, wish them every future success in their cultural endeavors, and offer our hopes for many more years of quality dramatic productions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.